

Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheet attached in connection with the above-identified application containing Figure 1 is being presented as a new formal drawing sheet to be substituted for the previously submitted drawing sheet. The drawing figure 1 has been amended. Appended to this amendment is an annotated copy of the previous drawing sheet which has been marked to show changes presented in the replacement sheet of the drawing.

The specific changes which have been made to Figure 1 are:

Reference 11 has been added.

REMARKS**Status of Claims**

The Office Action mailed December 16, 2005 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-23 were pending in the application with claims 9 and 21 withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended and no claims have been canceled or newly added. Therefore, claims 1-23 are pending in the application with claims 1-8, 10-20, 22, and 23 presented for reconsideration. It should be noted that the amendments to claims 1 and 14 correct typographical errors and do not narrow the scope of these claims in any way.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, are presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Applicants sincerely thank the examiner for indicating that claims 2-8, 11-13, 15-21, and 23 contain allowable subject matter and that no prior art has been applied against claim 22.

Objections to the Drawings

A formal drawing Replacement Sheet for Figure 1 is attached to overcome the objection indicated in paragraph 2 of the Office Action. Support for the change is provided at least at paragraph [0027] of the originally filed specification.

Objections to the Claims

Claims 1-13 are objected to for minor informalities. As indicated earlier, claim 1 has been amended to correct the noted informality.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 6,563,230 to Nada (hereafter "Nada"). Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nada as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S.

patent 6,114,784 to Nakano (hereafter "Nakano"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites a hybrid vehicular drive system in which the drive sources and the output member are linked in a revolution speed order of the first motor/generator, the engine, the output member, and the second motor/generator and a first clutching section and a second clutching section are disposed on the ends of the lever diagram (of a planetary gear mechanism that includes these elements). Therefore, the output member is not arranged on the end of the lever diagram but is rather on an intermediate (i.e., inside) position on the lever diagram. Thus, this arrangement provides the advantage that if either one or two of the drive sources are abnormal (provide abnormal outputs), with either one or two of the first clutching section and the second clutching section clutched, the vehicle is able to run using at least one of the drive sources which is not abnormal and therefore a, so-called, limp-form can be established.

In sharp contrast to these recited features, Nada discloses that that the drive sources and the output member are linked on the lever diagram in an order of the first motor/generator (MG1), the engine, the second motor/generator (MG2), and the output member, and teaches that the output member is arranged on the lever diagram at one end of the lever diagram. Therefore, Nada does not teach that the output member is arranged at an intermediate position (at a position which is not either of the ends) on the lever diagram. It is a natural consequence that Nada also does not teach that the first clutching section and the second clutching section are arranged on the respective ends of the lever diagram with the output member at an intermediate position of the lever diagram. Therefore, the hybrid system of Nada cannot obtain the advantage provided by the features recited in claim 1.

Since all the recited features in claim 1 are not disclosed by Nada, claim 1 is not anticipated by Nada. Furthermore, neither the specific recited features in claim 1 nor its advantages are disclosed or suggested by Nada. Accordingly, independent claim 1 is patentable over the applied prior art.

The claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nada applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Nakano. Claim 10 is also patentable over the applied prior art for the same reasons as independent claim 1 from which it depends.

Furthermore, Nakano also does not cure the deficiencies of Nada. Specifically, Nakano teaches that the drive sources and the output member are linked in the order of the first motor/generator (inner rotor 10), the engine, and second motor/generator (outer rotor 30) and the output member is arranged on one end of the lever diagram. Nakano does not teach that the output member is arranged on an intermediate position of the lever diagram (at a position other than the ends thereof). It follows, therefore, that Nakano does not teach that the first clutching section and the second clutching section are arranged on the respective ends of the output member on the lever diagram. Therefore, Nakano also does not cure the deficiencies of Nada. Accordingly, the pending claims are also patentable over any reasonable combination of Nada and Nakano.

The dependent claims are also patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims on which they ultimately depend. In addition, they recite additional patentable features when considered as a whole. In this context, applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claim 2-8, 11-13, 15-21, and 23.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. If there are any questions or if an examiner's amendment would facilitate the allowance of one or more of the claims, the examiner is courteously invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date March 16, 2006

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